

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 9187

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, NI, SHUM
SUBJECT: NEW STATE MILITARY ADMINISTRATORS SWORN IN

REF: LAGOS 8878

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED.

1. THE DAILY TIMES REPORTED THE SWEARING IN OF THE NEW STATE MILITARY ADMINISTRATORS ON JULY 24 BY HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO. DURING CEREMONIES, HE ANNOUNCED THE TITLE "YOUR EXCELLENCY" WILL NOT BE USED IN ADDRESSING THE ADMINISTRATORS. "YOU ARE TO BE ADDRESSED BY YOUR MILITARY RANK AND APPOINTMENT." OBASANJO ALSO WARNED THAT "YOU ARE NOT A LAME DUCK GOVERNMENT. YOU WILL, THEREFORE, ADMINISTER YOUR STATE FIRMLY , PURPOSEFULLY AND EFFECTIVELY UNTIL HAND OVER TO ELECTED GOVERNMENT." HE ALSO WARNED THE NEW ADMINISTRATORS TO REEVALUATE THEIR OLD FRIENDS TO SEE WHETHER THEY "ARE LIKELY TO USE YOU FOR THEIR PERSONAL OR POLITICAL INTERESTS OR TO SETTLE OLD SCORES."

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2. WITH REGARD TO THEIR DUTIES, AND THOSE OF THEIR CIVILIAN DEPUTIES, LT. GENERAL OBASANJO TOLD THE ADMINISTRATORS TO GIVE THE DEPUTY CHAIRMEN IN THEIR STATES THE RIGHT TO PRESIDE OVER COUNCIL MEETINGS WHENEVER THEY SO DIRECT. ALL THE DEPUTY CHAIRMEN MAY ALSO BE DETAILED BY THE ADMINISTRATORS TO CARRY OUT ANY ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS BUT NEVER TO ACT FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR SINCE THEY ARE NOT MILITARY OR POLICE OFFICERS.

3. ON THE SUBJECT OF OFFICE AND RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS, OBASANJO SAID: "BECAUSE OF THE MILITARY NATURE OF YOUR JOB YOU WILL NOT LIVE IN THE STATE HOUSE. THE OFFICE AND EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE WILL BE AVAILABLE TO YOU WHEN YOU ARE ENGAGED IN NON-MILITARY DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS. YOU WILL OF COURSE KEEP YOUR NORMAL OFFICE WITHIN THE MILITARY STATION."

4. FINALLY, THE HEAD OF STATE DREW A STRICT LINE BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATORS' JOBS AS GARRISON COMMANDERS ON THE ONE HAND AND STATE MILITARY ADMINISTRATORS ON THE OTHER HAND: "ON MILITARY MATTERS, YOU WILL MAINTAIN NORMAL MILITARY CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATIONS TO YOUR SERVICE CHIEFS, BUT ON POLITICAL AND CIVIL MATTERS YOUR COMMUNICATION IS TO THE SUPREME HEAD-QUARTERS THROUGH THE CHIEF OF STAFF."

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5. COMMENT: NOW THAT GUIDELINES HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO THE NEW MILITARY ADMINISTRATORS, PUBLIC ATTENTION IS TURNING TO THEIR CIVILIAN

DEPUTIES. NIGERIAN TRIBUNE, JULY 25, NOTED THAT NO QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE DEPUTIES HAVE BEEN LAID DOWN BY SMC, "WHOEVER IS TO

BECOME VIRTUAL RULER OF A STATE SHOULD HAVE A THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF THE STATE--GEOGRAPHICALLY, HISTORICALLY AND CULTURALLY.
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OTHERWISE, HE WILL MAKE TOO MANY MISTAKES AND CREATE MORE

PROBLEMS FOR THE STATE GOVERNMENT THAN HE IS ASKED TO SOLVE." BE THAT AS IT MAY, THE NEW MILITARY ADMINISTRATORS WILL BE EXPECTED TO TAKE A BACK SEAT TO THEIR CIVILIAN COUNTERPARTS. IT

IS DOUBTFUL THEY WILL BE ALLOWED TO BASK IN THE TYPE OF PRESS COVERAGE THAT HAS RECORDED EVERY MOVEMENT OF GOVERNORS SUCH AS OYO STATE'S BRIG. DAVID JEMIBEWON.
WYMAN

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